

October 27, 1969

OPINION LETTER No. 354



Honorable G.W. Weier
Prosecuting Attorney
Jefferson County Courthouse
Hillsboro, Missouri 63050

Dear Mr. Weier:

This is in response to your opinion request concerning the authority of the individual police officers constituting the Major Case Squad of the Greater St. Louis area with respect to arrests and search and seizure outside of the areas for which they are individually commissioned.

In answer to your question, for the sake of clarity and in view of the normal function of the Squad we assume that we are not considering questions of "hot pursuit" such as contemplated by the "hue and cry" statute, Section 544.120, RSMo 1959, or the authority of the peace officers of St. Louis County within the provisions of the "hot pursuit" statute, Section 544.157, RSMo Supp. 1967.

That is, it is our understanding that it is the primary function of the Major Case Squad to assist in providing an expeditious solution to the more serious types of crimes; and in pursuit of this purpose, the Squad is organized largely on an emergency and investigative basis.

It is also our understanding that the Major Case Squad of the Greater St. Louis area is composed of representatives of the law enforcement agencies of the Greater St. Louis area in Missouri and Illinois, including various peace officers in St. Louis County and adjoining counties.

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It is clear that a peace officer always retains the same power to arrest as does a private individual. It is also clear, however, that except for the application of the "hot pursuit" statute and with certain other exceptions not relevant here peace officers cannot act officially outside the boundaries of their respective jurisdictions. The officers involved do not have normal police powers outside of the areas for which they are individually commissioned.

Very truly yours,

JOHN C. DANFORTH
Attorney General